



PROGRAMS IN

profile

Wellhead Protection Program

Promoting clean drinking water and protecting our groundwater

Over the past several years, much has been written about our local groundwater supply and its vulnerability. The adoption of the Wellhead Protection Ordinance in 2003 acknowledged the importance of the supply and the need to protect it and the areas around the wells. In 2004, the City put its Wellhead Protection Plan into action by hiring the Wellhead Protection Team, Kevin Murphy and Rebecca Borker.

Redmond has five shallow groundwater wells that provide over 35% of its daily drinking water supply. For over 50 years, our wells have supplied clean, cool and a seemingly inexhaustible supply of drinking water. These wells will become even more vital as our city grows, as outside water vendors raise prices, and during shortages in water supply.

The wells are located on the valley floor in downtown Redmond. Rainwater from the surrounding hills, streams, forest and wetlands soaks into the ground around the wells, recharging the groundwater supply. The area that supplies this water to our wells is called the Critical Aquifer Recharge Area. Protection of the groundwater that feeds these wells and the greater area that recharges groundwater supply is the primary goal of the Wellhead Protection Program Ordinance and Program.

Everyone in Redmond must take deliberate steps to safeguard the groundwater supply.

Currently, however, the Wellhead Protection Team is focusing its outreach efforts on the 2,000 business customers located within the Critical Aquifer Recharge Area. Hazardous Materials Questionnaires were sent out with the business license renewals in September 2004. These businesses were asked to take a serious look at potential threats at their sites and address how they would eliminate hazards with the proper handling, storage and use of unsafe materials.

At the beginning of 2005, the City began the second round of information gathering and working with local businesses with specific needs. In this round, businesses with large amounts of hazardous materials are asked to inventory their materials and focus on safer ways to handle, store and dispose of them. In addition, Redmond businesses will be educating employees on the safe use and disposal of materials and developing a response plan in case of a spill. To make the process easier and more efficient for businesses, the Wellhead Protection Team is reaching out to

businesses with unique questions or concerns.

Redmond will continue to work with state and local agencies and property owners to ensure that properties are cleaned and to reduce potential hazards to our groundwater. We will be establishing additional monitoring points throughout the city to keep tabs on our groundwater quality. Information on the Ordinance and how it is being implemented will be shared with the community through our outreach program in the coming months.

The community has been wonderfully supportive and responsive to the efforts of the Wellhead Protection Team. One business owner who had no idea his office was near the wells thanked Redmond for its wellhead protection program and even offered to help with outreach as a volunteer!

If you have questions about groundwater protection, please visit www.redmond.gov/insidecityhall/publicworks/environment/groundwaterordinance.asp, call Kevin Murphy at 425-556-2756, or email the Wellhead Protection Team at groundwater@redmond.gov.

Though the program focuses on businesses and other facilities that use hazardous materials, it is also important for our residents to ensure safe use and storage of hazardous materials around their homes. Residents should also report any spills by calling 425-556-2825.



City of Redmond Wellhead Protection Team tests groundwater